

Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.



U. S. [illegible]

Housekeepers' Chat

Wednesday, January 22, 1930.

Not for Publication

Subject: "If You Like to Sew!" Approved by Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. D. A.

--ooOoo--

Last week I was talking with a friend of mine who is an expert practical dressmaker. I told her I was planning to give a talk soon for women who liked to sew.

"Aunt Sammy," suggested my friend, "why don't you give a talk for women who do not like to sew? I think that would be more to the point."

"A good idea," I said, "and since you have made a special study of sewing, and sewing machines, would you mind preparing such a talk?"

At first my friend objected. She said she specialized in clothing, not in radio announcing. But when I told her that women would appreciate hearing her practical tips on sewing, she laid aside the dress she was finishing, borrowed a pencil from me, and wrote a little talk called: "If You don't like to Sew." This is what she wrote:

"If you don't like to sew, perhaps it is because you do not have your sewing equipment arranged in the most comfortable and convenient way. Where is your sewing machine located? Is it in a dark corner of the kitchen, or in the hall? If so, you probably have to do your sewing in poor light, or where it is so cold that you must move the sewing machine every time you use it. Try placing the machine near a window, from which you get an attractive view, or in a spot which is sunny most of the day. This may mean placing the sewing machine in a bedroom, in the dining room, or even in the living room. If it is an old-fashioned model, and not a thing of beauty, you might hide it, together with other sewing equipment, behind an attractive screen.

"If you have a screen, to hide your sewing machine, you might attach to this screen a case with pockets, like one used for shoes, to hold your latest patterns. If you have no screen, hang the pattern case on a closet door. You'll be surprised to find how handy such a case will be. Make your pattern case of any washable material, such as gingham, prints, or cretonne. Mine is made of unbleached muslin. The edges are finished with bias tape, in a color which harmonizes with the screen. Fold a small box pleat in the bottom of each pocket to allow for spreading when the patterns are put in. Smaller pockets might be used for bias tape, cards or buttons, hooks and eyes, snap-fasteners, scissors, and a tapeline.



"If you don't like to sew, it may be because your sewing machine runs noisily, and not so easily as it should. Have you given it a bath since spring? There are some kinds of machine oil which leave a gum-like deposit on the surface, when they dry. This type of machine oil should never be used, but if it has been, use kerosene to clean it off. Give each oil hole a plentiful supply of kerosene, and run the machine several minutes. Then wipe off the excess kerosene, and oil the machine thoroughly, with a good sewing machine oil. Run the machine again for several minutes, so that the oil is well distributed in the joints. Don't forget to tip the head of the machine back, and oil its underparts, as well as the upper. If a sewing machine is used at all, it should be oiled once a month. If it is used much, it should be oiled more often.

"Large scraps left from cutting one garment should have a definite place. Sometimes a small chest of drawers can be used for these, and for new material not yet made up. Medium-sized suit boxes, kept in convenient place, and plainly marked, may also be used. Silk pieces, as well as those from wash dresses, and wool dresses, should be kept in separate boxes, or drawers. Then it will be much easier to find the kind of pieces you need.

"Someone has said that 'Order is heaven's first law' and it may be that disorder and unpleasant surroundings are part of the reason why some women do not like to sew."

That is all of my friend's talk on sewing. I think I shall call on her again some time.

There are a number of questions to be answered, before we broadcast the children's menu.

First question: "Do you have any bulletins or leaflets which will help the home dressmaker who has a family of small children?"

Yes indeed. For the grown-up member of the family, there's the bulletin called "Fitting Dresses and Blouses." It contains a lot of good information about foundation patterns, setting in sleeves, and so forth. Then, for the younger members of the family, there are some splendid new illustrated leaflets, among them being "Children's Rompers," "Sun Suits for Children," "Dresses for the Little Girl," "Suits for the Small Boy," and "Play Suits for Winter." If you can't remember all these titles, just send for the leaflets about making clothes for young children, and I'll see that you get all of them.

Second question: "Please tell me how to garnish cold meats, attractively."

Answer: Cut the meat into thin slices and arrange it in neat rows on the platter. Garnish with strips of dill pickle, or bits of parsley, or water-cress, or celery tops. For Sunday night supper I often serve sliced chicken and cold sliced ham together on a platter, so that slices of both can be lifted together. Another standby in our family is slices of cold sliced ham, arranged around a potato salad.

R-H.C. 1/22

Second question: "What is the proper way to serve a lemon garnish, with fish?"

Answer: Instead of placing the slices of lemon on the platter with the fish, where they become greasy, cut the lemon lengthwise, into six or eight sections, and pass them on a separate plate. Then one can squeeze the juice from the lemon without getting his fingers greasy. If you want the sections of lemon to be especially "stylish and becoming," roll them in finely chopped parsley. Or you might prefer to sprinkle the parsley directly on the fish.

We might mention beefsteak and chops, while we're on the subject. Tasty vegetables to serve on the platter with beefsteak, around the meat, are fried potatoes, browned mushrooms, fried tomatoes, or fried onions. Lamb chops are attractive when arranged on a hot platter, around a mound of green peas, or buttered carrots, or highly piled mashed potatoes.

With pork chops, serve apple rings, or jellied apples colored red. Of course there's nothing better than cream gravy, poured over the pork chops when they are placed on the platter. Suitable green garnishes for meat are watercress, parsley, and celery tops. Use only enough to give a touch of color. Too much garnish of any kind makes a dish look sort of self-conscious and uncomfortable.

No more questions today. Let's write our menu, which has been planned with the children in mind: Broiled Liver; Baked Potatoes; Buttered Asparagus; Prunes and Apricots cooked together; and Cinnamon Toast.

Do you know why liver is considered important in the diet? Because of its use in the cure and prevention of anemia. It is especially desirable in children's diets.

To prepare the liver, slice it about one-half inch thick. Parboil the slices. Sprinkle with salt and pepper, dip in melted butter, and broil under a low flame for five minutes or more, depending upon the thickness of the slices. Place on a hot platter, and add melted butter before serving. The rest of today's menu is very simple.

Let's go over it once more: Broiled Liver; Baked Potatoes; Buttered Asparagus; Prunes and Apricots cooked together; and Cinnamon Toast.

Tomorrow: "A Handy Cleaning Closet."

###

